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Spring 1999
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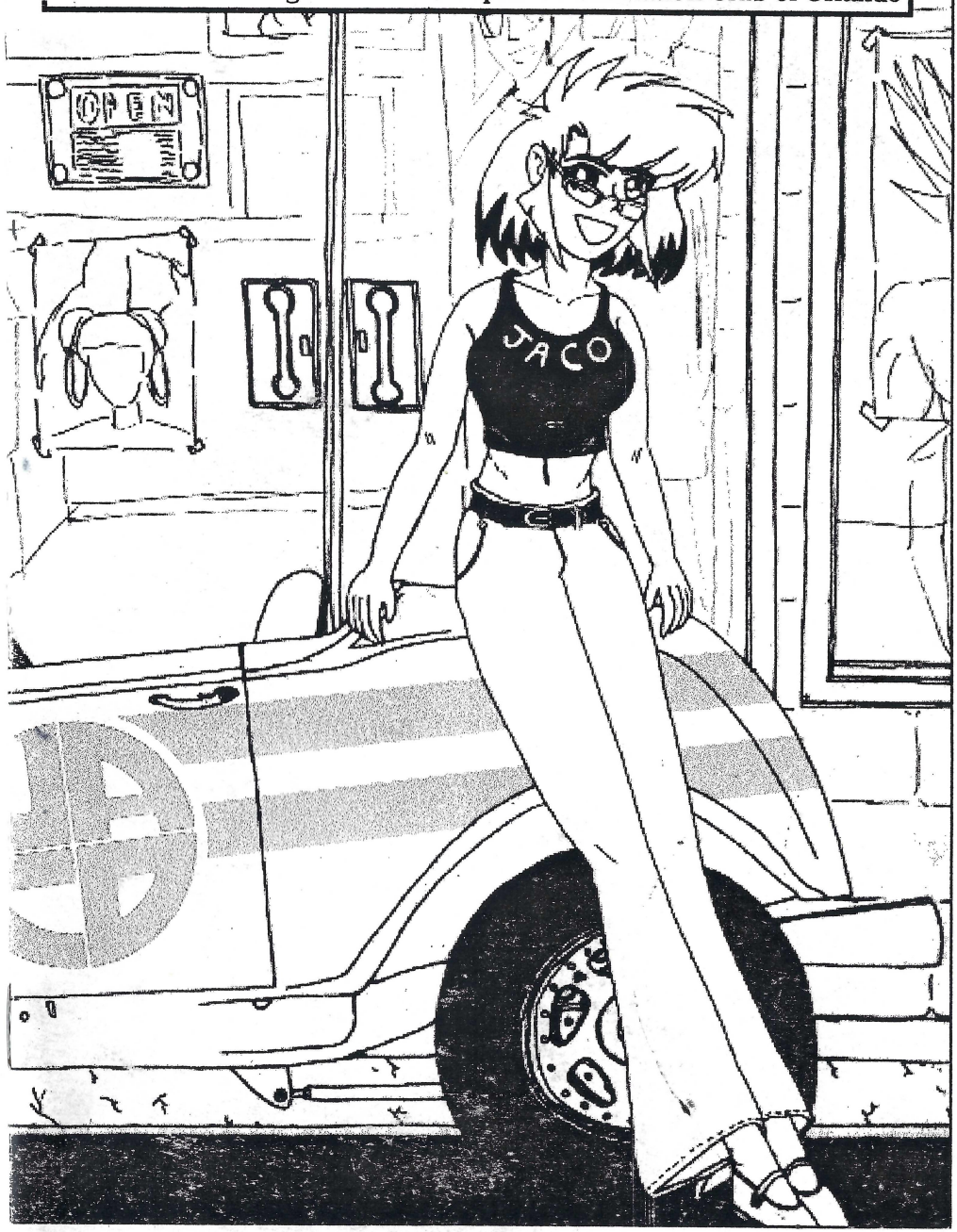
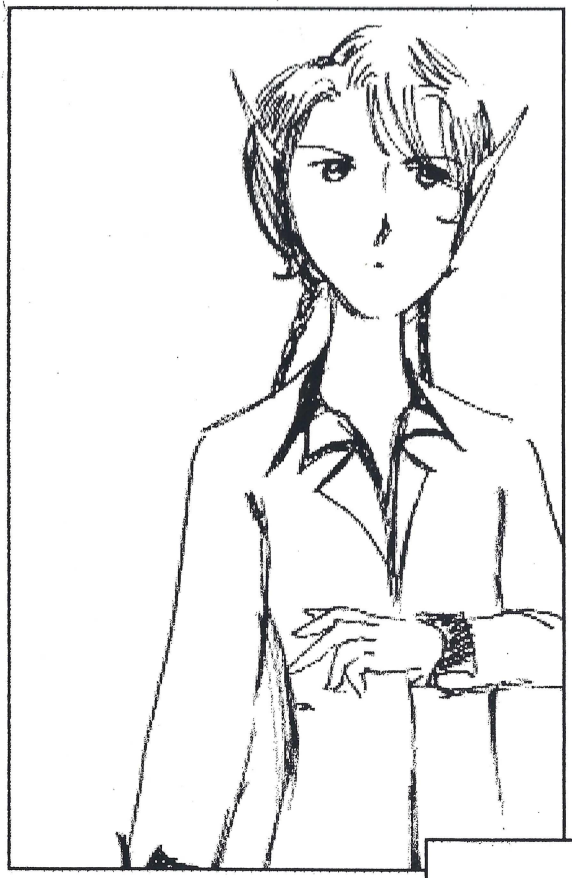
PROJECT JACO

The Official Fan-Magazine of The Japanese Animation Club of Orlando

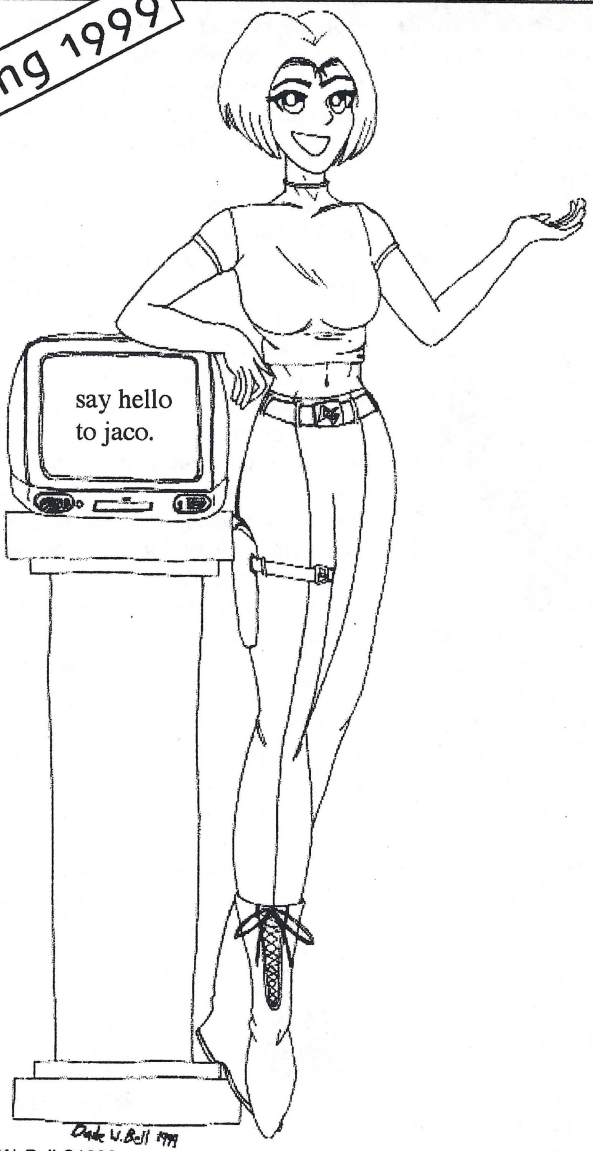




Jackie Dolamore © 1999

PROJECT JACO

Spring 1999



Dade W. Bell ©1999

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Cover Picture: *"Saturday on Colonial"* drawn by **Dade Bell**. M3-Chan stands proudly in front of her customized 1932 Ford Highboy while original JACO mascot Miki Mecha happily polishes the car. They're parked in front of an anime store on Colonial in downtown Orlando.

"And he smiled. And said, 'I'm going.'
So he left that peaceful life behind."
---The Eagles

Some Words From The Editor:

Well folks, here we are at 1999 and Project JACO has managed to survive in one way or another. The same can be said for JACO as a whole. The club has gone through many different forms over the years and so has its fanzine.

But the more things change, the more things stay the same. For example, this year will be the third in a row that JACO will be at Megacon. This year things look to be bigger and better than ever and that's not just marketing hype. The sheer amount of members this club has is testament to that and our role in Megacon has gotten very high profile.

It was also at the Megacon before last year's that Project JACO made its return from the ashes. By the way, for any who may have noticed, this issue is being made by the guy who did that good old issue of days past: yours truly. I think it's fitting that I find my return at the helm with the same issue that brought me to the on in the first place.

I'd like to thank Lonny Volat for running Project JACO while I was on my extended sabbatical (although at the time it sure seemed like I would be gone forever). Lonny stepped in and did a bang up job of running the fanzine while life took me in another direction.

But life changes for good or bad and I find myself returning to Project JACO, my old friend, as well as JACO itself, where all of my best friends are. And this good old life is wonderful to come back to- you *can* go home again!

On other fronts, some of you reading this 'zine are probably reading it for the first time to which I say welcome! If you happened to pick this up at Megacon, please tell me what you think of this fanzine as well as JACO's job as a whole.

Shoot, feel free to talk and visit since it's been JACO's "circle of friends" feel that has always been its greatest strength. Of course, this also goes for you JACO people too! Tell me what you think of the fanzine.

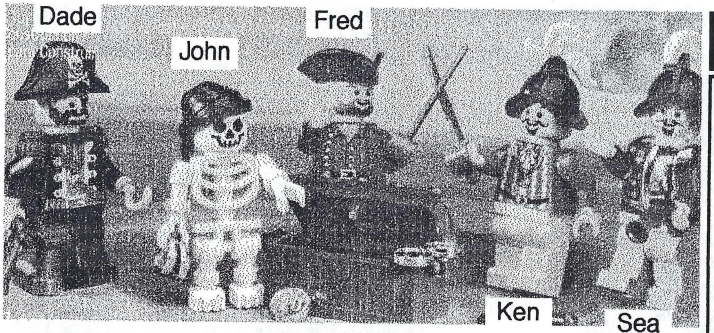
One warning though, if you complain about the content, I'll nag you to write your own content to put in. This is a *club* magazine and I want as many club members as possible to contribute! Yeah, yeah, I know I've always said that (as did Lonny), but it's true! Come on down, you're the next writer for Project JACO!

Last but not least, I want to congratulate JACO president Ken Nabbe and JACO (South) member Winnie Augustine on their debut on talk radio. They got to talk about anime and JACO itself on a South Florida radio station, so while JACO's reach has always extended north and west (and overseas), this time it extended south. Yes, our plans for world domination are going smoothly...

In closing, I just want to say how great it is to be back in charge of the Silver Age Project JACO and I want to thank those who gave me encouraging words. I've missed everyone and I'm happy to be back.

Dade W. Bell

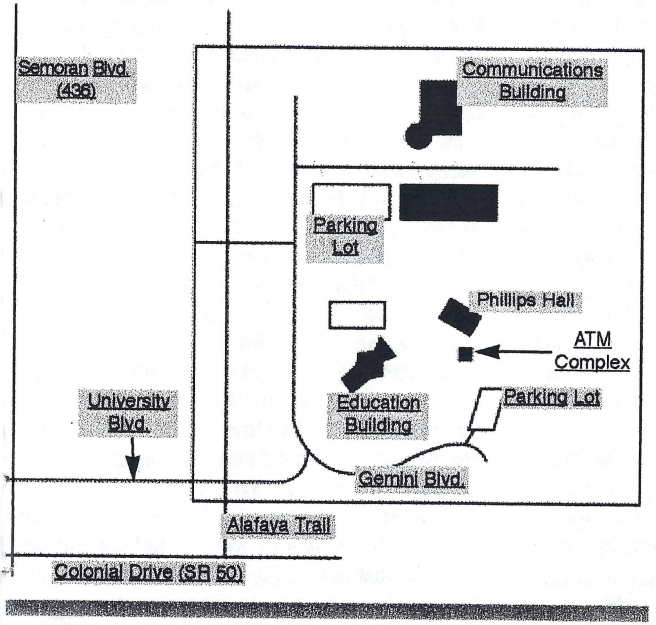
Dade W. Bell
karybdis@aol.com



Project JACO is a quarterly publication of the Japanese Animation Club of Orlando. A basic JACO annual silver membership is $15. A gold membership with JACO includes an automatic annual post-paid subscription to Project JACO. Gold memberships are $25 and are renewed annually. Platinum lifetime memberships are $60 and also include a lifetime Project JACO subscription. Send payment to:

JACO
c/o Fred Leggett III
2108 Howard Drive
Orlando, FL 32803

JACO meets every second and fourth Saturday of the month in room 101 at the Communications Building at the University of Central Florida. Meetings begin at 7 p.m. Membership is encouraged, but not required to attend meetings.



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This book is again produced on a Power Macintosh 8600/250 with 96 MB of RAM. All scans were done with a Microtek ScanMaker IIHR. Quark Express 3.31 was utilized for layout and production with an Apple Color StyleWriter 2500 used for the master print. For graphics and publishing, Macintosh is the *only* choice (especially in Japan!). Real designers don't do Windoze!

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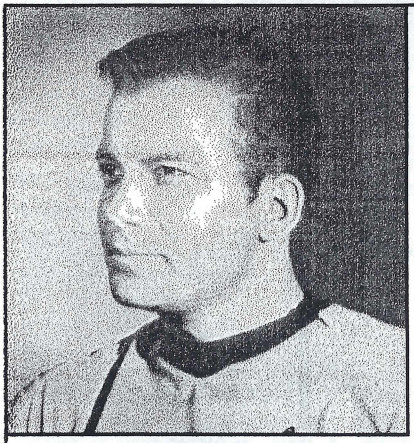
LETTER FROM THE PREZ

TONIGHT'S THRILLING EPISODE: SNOOTY



By Ken Nabbe

Anime Weekend Atlanta had reached its apex, and the party was waning down at about 2:00am on Sunday morning. Your dear president was doing quite well finishing off his bottle of Vodka, and created a slight impromptu round–table discussion with the best and brightest of JACO (and Mr. Bartels). I then was suddenly approached by a man that seemed to be just as under the weather as I was. His comment was, "Your club is snooty."

Well a comment like that made me raise a distinct eyebrow. *Snooty?* After awhile I was able to get from the man that he was a dealer, and he felt we were snooty for not showing commercial titles that his company was trying to push on Anime Fandom at large. Therefore, if we do not show what was available on the shelves, we are "snooty".

Many of you may be able to remember back when I discussed the need for the Anime Club in today's day and age. With the explosion of available titles, even those we never thought would have domestic releases (*Gundam 0080*, *The Original MS Gundam Movies*), the question of a need is brought up almost weekly, by myself, or by members of the JACO support staff. I am beginning my second year as the club's programmer, and through that time I have pushed the use of non–commercially available titles and shows in our meetings. What is the use of schlepping down to the JACO meeting on a Saturday night, when you could just zip by your local Blockbuster and rent the same thing? Yes we showed *Transformers: The Movie*, but when was the last time you saw the Canadian release on the shelves of your local video rental store?

The purpose of JACO is to promote the genre known as Anime to the Orlando area. We are not a substitute for the commercial release houses, even though we might work Fred as though he is one. We are here to supplement those groups, and with that, we promote all forms of Anime. These include the fansubs that we produce or acquire, the bootlegs that our members acquire, and the scant number of commercial items that we show. If we were to limit ourselves to only, or even mostly, commercial releases it would be asinine. It would limit to us to only a handful of the butt–ton (note: official terminology) of titles available to us now. Who would want membership in a club that just has commercial items? Without members, where would the Club get funding? Without funding, how could we get more members? Do we see the cycle?

With that I wear the title of "Snooty" as a badge of honor. It shows that we are open-minded enough not to limit ourselves to one of the many outlets that Anime is availible to us through. We have always prided ourselves as the primere location to watch *never before seen* anime in this area, and continue to keep ourselves at that level. So label us "Snooty", because it is not going to change anytime soon.

Anime Music Videos

By Eric Wampner

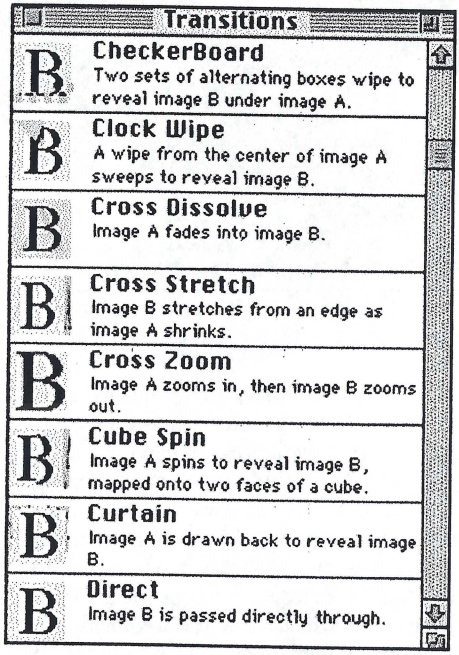
In our excitement about Anime, we are all apt to get swept away and commit ourselves to projects which quickly become overwhelming. I am certainly no exception, and Anime music videos are my current exasperation. Being a member of what I call the JACO "old guard", I remember some of our club member's earliest attempts at music videos. A number of club members journeyed to AnimeCon in 1991 and 1992 and were exposed to a large number of music videos set to video clips from various shows such as *Izcer-1* and *Robotech*. At the time, I hadn't seen many of these, and wasn't excited about the idea. Anime Weekend Atlanta II in 1996, a time when I was just returning to Anime and JACO activities, showed me that Anime music videos could be some serious fun. At AWA II I came face to face with one of my favorite music videos, *Total Eclipse of the Heart* by C-Ko, and began to think seriously about trying my hand at video creation.

I started out as an Amiga-phile, the first home computer you could do serious video work on, and as seems to be fairly common, developed an understanding of working with video. Making a music video involves arranging a sequence of segments of video and playing them back with an audio track. This can be done with as little as a pair of regular VCRs, but most people use higher quality equipment to make sure that their video looks as good as possible.

Along with better video image quality, more expensive VCRs also offer features which directly impact the process of making a music video. A flying erase head is common on mid to high level VCRs and smoothes the transition from one piece recorded video to another, this is probably a must for anybody making a serious effort. More expensive equipment will offer features which allow you to directly choose which frames (video signals in the US and Japan are composed of individual frames of an image which are played rapidly on the screen at about 30 frames per second) of video are played from a tape, and the exact position to which they are recorded to. The highest level consumer VCRs are typically S-VHS machines. They will typically have most of these features and offer much higher video image quality.

Technical issues aside, producing a music video will involve lots of playback from your source machine while you record on your destination machine. Each segment must be placed back to back, and usually synchronized with the music. As I started to consider making my own music videos, I realized that I didn't have a VCR with good editing capabilities, nor did I feel like purchasing one for the project.

Arranging the segments would have to be done on the fly, or on paper and a would be a great deal of work. However, a computer can be used for both recording and playback, and for the price of a fairly good S-VHS deck, I could get a computer card which would allow me to do the editing of the video on the computer. My choice was made.


Transitions
CheckerBoard
Two sets of alternating boxes wipe to reveal image B under image A.
Clock Wipe
A wipe from the center of image A sweeps to reveal image B.
Cross Dissolve
Image A fades into image B.
Cross Stretch
Image B stretches from an edge as image A shrinks.
Cross Zoom
Image A zooms in, then image B zooms out.
Cube Spin
Image A spins to reveal image B, mapped onto two faces of a cube.
Curtain
Image A is drawn back to reveal image B.
Direct
Image B is passed directly through.

I am not quite as naïve as that, I knew that I would need a bunch of creativity to make a music video, so I held back on my purchase for a while, pondering this idea or that when I got together with Fred Leggett. Fred told me that he and John Stepp had a old anime music video that they wanted to re-edit. Now, some music videos are simply stunning, but others are hard to watch simply because the video source quality was bad, or the equipment used to make the video was not great, or sometimes simply because the 2124th generation tape is not quite as good as the 2123rd. This video was done to *Sister Christian* by Night Ranger, and the video clips were from *Five Star Stories (FSS)*, one of John's favorite shows. Fred coughed up the *FSS* laser disc, John dug out a copy of the video and the Night Ranger CD, and I plopped down my credit card for the video capture/playback card.

What was I saying about naïveté? Well, not to mention the challenge of getting together to work on the video, it was pretty obvious from the start that each of us had different goals for the project. I was looking to cut my teeth with a new software package (Adobe Premiere) and learn the workings of my new toy. John wanted to re-edit the video staying as much as possible with the original. Fred wanted to correct many of the "What does this have to do with the last scene, the music, or anything else?" problems that we began to see in the video. We got about one minute into a five minute video and blew several weeks arguing. This began to look bleak for our heroes, and it began to get much harder to get the three of us together.

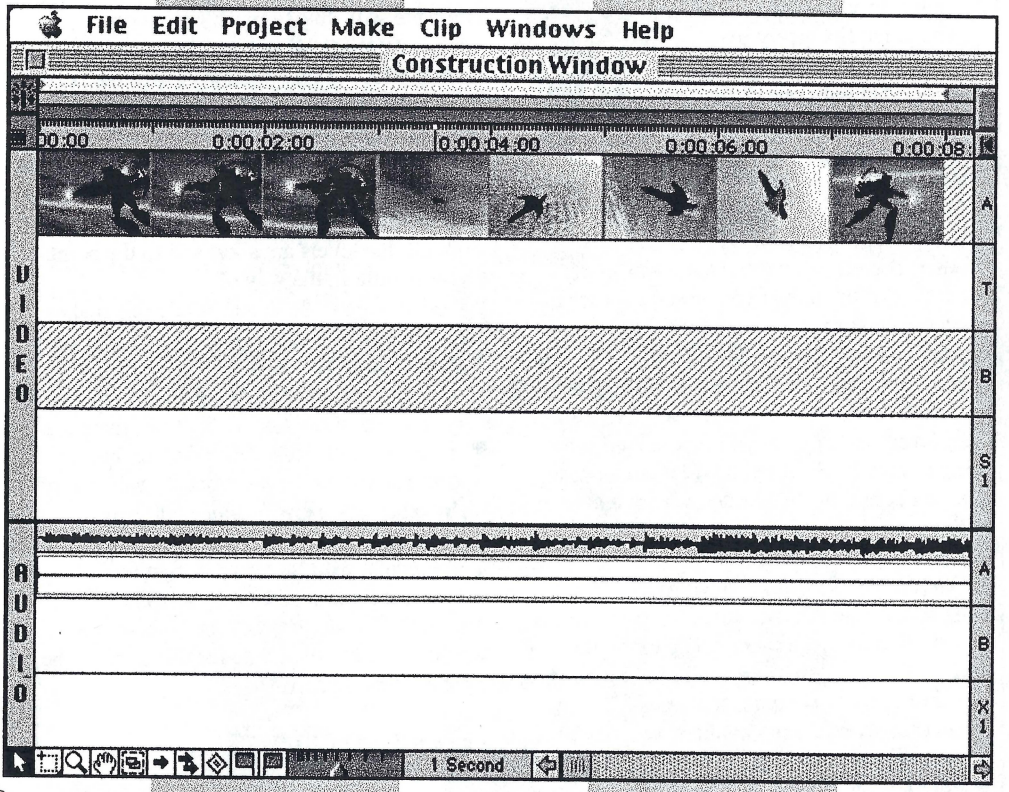
Eventually we persevered, and fairly improved version of the video emerged. Unfortunately Premiere coughed up a hair ball and ate the video sequence, forcing us back to square one. Sigh. Fred and I re-assembled the video as best we could, and to this day we still await John to make some last tweaks to correct some mis-timings. In short, both Fred and John are unhappy about the video, for different reasons and it probably won't ever get truly fixed. Plus, there is the very real possibility of eventually having to face the wrath of the creator of the original video. You win some, you lose some.

That experience tucked under my belt, I used the equipment to re-edit two other videos, with the intent of staying frame-by-frame true to the original video to avoid the creative issues and angry video makers. *Remember Me* set to *Ah My Goddess (AMG)* was a recent creation, but was in pretty bad condition even as shown at the AWA Music Video Contest. Since the soundtrack was in fairly good shape, and I own the AnimEigo *AMG* laser discs, I chose this as my first victim. It took about 8 hours of work, a small pittance compared to the effort that went into the *FSS* video. Because the disks are subtitled, I was considering this a test run, with the expectation of locating the original Japanese discs at a later time. Disaster struck yet again, I hated the video. Cleaning it up only

increased my loathing of it, and after 8 hours of working on it, I was no longer interested in completing the project.

Fortunately, the other video has a happier ending. This one was found on the same tape which contained the *FSS* video. The song is *Veteran of the Psychic Wars* by Blue Oyster Cult, and is set to *Grey: Digital Target*. I found this video very appealing, and set out to locate the song and some video source. (The song is available on the *Heavy Metal* soundtrack, the video was released by Viz subbed and dubbed). Using a regular VHS tape as a source wasn't what I wanted, but I haven't located a copy of the laser disc yet. The output of the resulting video shows the poor source, but overall I consider it a pretty good result for the work done.

Fred and I have embarked upon a much more ambitious project. We are currently working on an anime video primer tape which will resemble the anime music primer tape which new members are given. Fred has a ton of extremely high quality anime source, and we are compiling a tape of video segments, show and movie promo bits, the best of the music videos, and some video game movies. Most of the video will feature items which you can only find on original Japanese laserdiscs. Since most JACO members (and Fred) can't afford this much of a collection, we hope that everyone will enjoy a peek at these treasures.



SHOGO 武岡

Mobile Armor Division

By P. Casey Hollis

Shogo is the first of many anime inspired PC games that have, or soon will, hit America shelves. I say "anime inspired" because the game was created by an American software company, Monolith Productions.

The game fits nicely into the first-person shoot-'em-up category, but with one difference – it actually has a story. Set on the war torn colony world of Cronus, Shogo details the personal quest of Sanjuro Makabe to rescue his brother, Toshiro, and survive the war in the process. All the things you would expect of a good anime story are here: plot twists, romantic possibilities, and character resurrections to name a few. These are revealed through in-game cut scenes and character dialogue within each level. Before you go in expecting something as epic as Final Fantasy, let emphasize that this is not, by any stretch, an adventure or RPG game. With that in mind, let's move on to where Shogo excels: action.

Sanjuro is a Mobile Combat Armor (read: giant robot) pilot and, as such, the game levels take on two forms: on foot and piloting the MCA. The foot levels are well done, with your standard array of weapons and enemies. Expect plenty of enemy soldiers, security personnel, and powered armor clad elite forces. Your character is more than up to the task with weapons ranging from John Woo style double pistols and shotguns to energy weapons and TOW missiles. While these on-foot levels are entertaining, they are not near as much fun as the mecha levels. There's nothing quite so satisfying as stomping through city streets, crushing cars and infantry alike under you feet. Don't worry about challenges, though, as there are plenty MCAs gunning for you, too.

Those of you with 3D accelerator cards are in for a pyrotechnic treat. Many of the MCA weapons are a site to behold. The "bullgut" is particularly cool – it fires a swarm of missiles, complete with smoke trails, explosions, expanding shock waves, and flying debris. The overall effect of this weapon creates the best eye candy feast I've seen in any game yet. The settings in the piloting levels are creative as well, with one level consisting of jumping from skyscraper rooftop to rooftop while not getting gunned down by your enemies.

In all, the levels are short and to the point. There is little in the way of puzzle solving to be done. While this makes for an intensive game, it also leads to my only real complaint: its too short. Some of the levels can be completed in less than a minute, and very few take more than five. True, there are many levels and a branching ending, but my overall playing time was probably half that of many other first person games out there.

With large eyed character, giant robots, and a protagonist with the name of Sanjuro Makabe, the game absolutely screams "anime!". In fact, redoing the voice-overs would be all it would take for this game to be right at home in Japan

I give it 8 out of 10.

For those on the lookout for more anime inspired PC games, two other titles to look for are Septerra Core (Monolith Studios) and Slave Zero (Accolade). Both are due to be released later this year.

A Review of Anime Reference Books

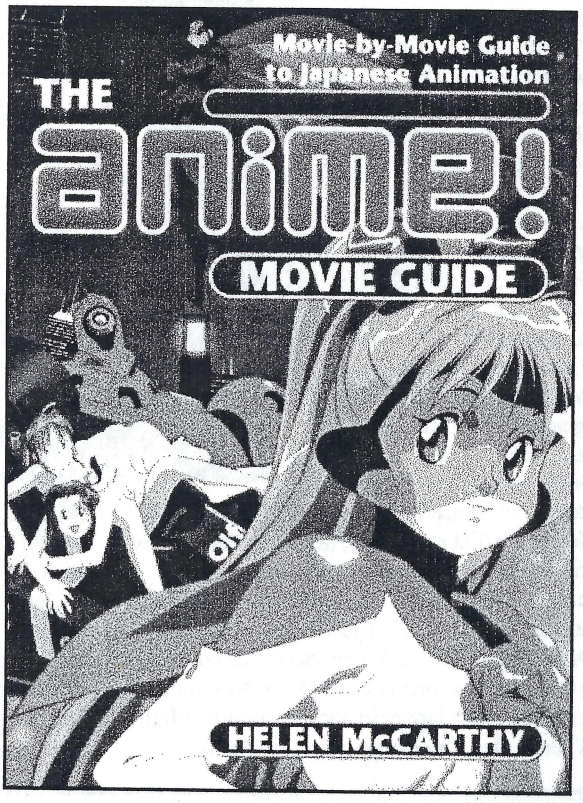
By Jackie Dolamore

If you like anime and you like books, chances are you've probably wondered if there are any books available about anime or other topics of interest to the anime fan such as manga or Japanese pop culture. Well, being the bookworm that I am, I have wondered, and I've found there are a handful available.

First there are your basic guides to available anime. *The Complete Anime Guide* by Trish Ledoux and Doug Ranney (216 pgs.,$19.95) gives information on every title released in America as well as an overview of anime on American TV and information about American fandom. According to Amazon, it's out of print. Then there's *The Anime! Movie Guide* by Helen McCarthy (285 pgs., $17.95), which has information and sometimes reviews (although you may disagree with her reviews at times-I do) of many of the movies and OAVs released in Japan from 1983-95. It also has American and U.K. release information when applicable. Unfortunately, no currently available book covers the TV series that aren't commercially released here, but hopefully someone's working on it.

Ms. McCarthy has a book on anime in general titled *Anime! A Beginners Guide to Japanese Animation.* This book isn't listed at Amazon and I've never seen a copy, so I can't say much about it, but it's available at Nikaku Animart last time I checked. I have also heard she's working on a book about Hayao Miyazaki, which I will certainly buy.

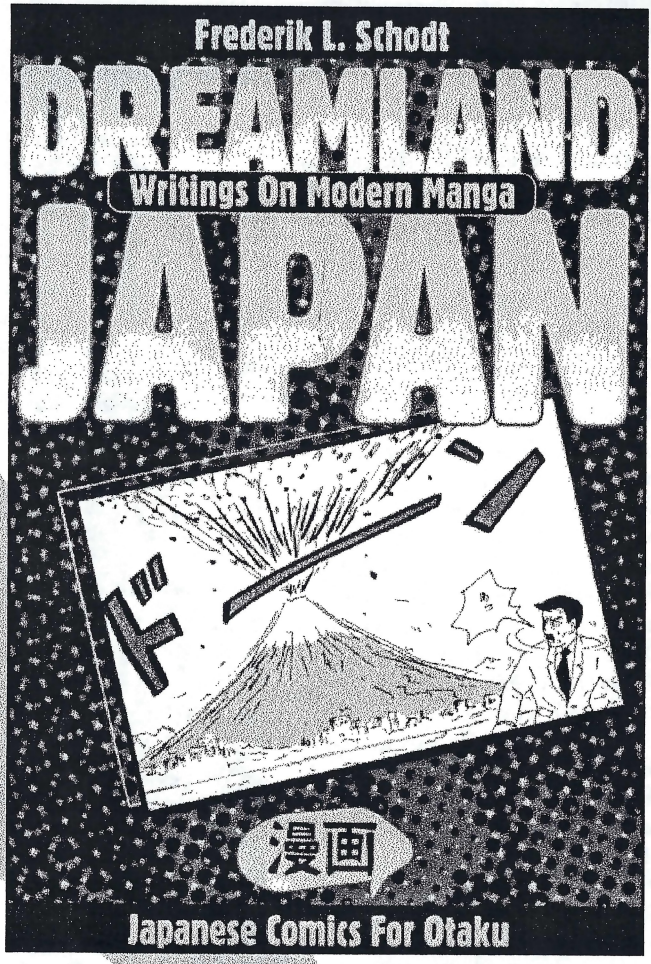
On the topic of general anime information books, I have read *Samurai From Outer Space* by Antonia Levi. This book discusses popular themes in anime and their cultural origins. It's interesting although I'd recommend getting it from the library (the downtown Orlando library has it) rather than buying it because it's not something you really need around. There's also a new book out, *The Anime Companion: What's Japanese In Japanese Animation?* by Gilles Poitras (176 pgs., $16.95), which apparently explains many of the cultural details and historical references in anime that may confuse the American viewer. I haven't actually read this book but it sounds interesting. For those of you who like to know about the people behind your favorite anime, *Anime Interviews: The First Five Years of Animerica, Anime & Manga*



Monthly (1992-1997), compiled by the editors of *Animerica* and Trish Ledoux(186 pgs., $19.95), may be the book for you. The title pretty much says it all. It's a pretty good bet one of your favorites is in there.

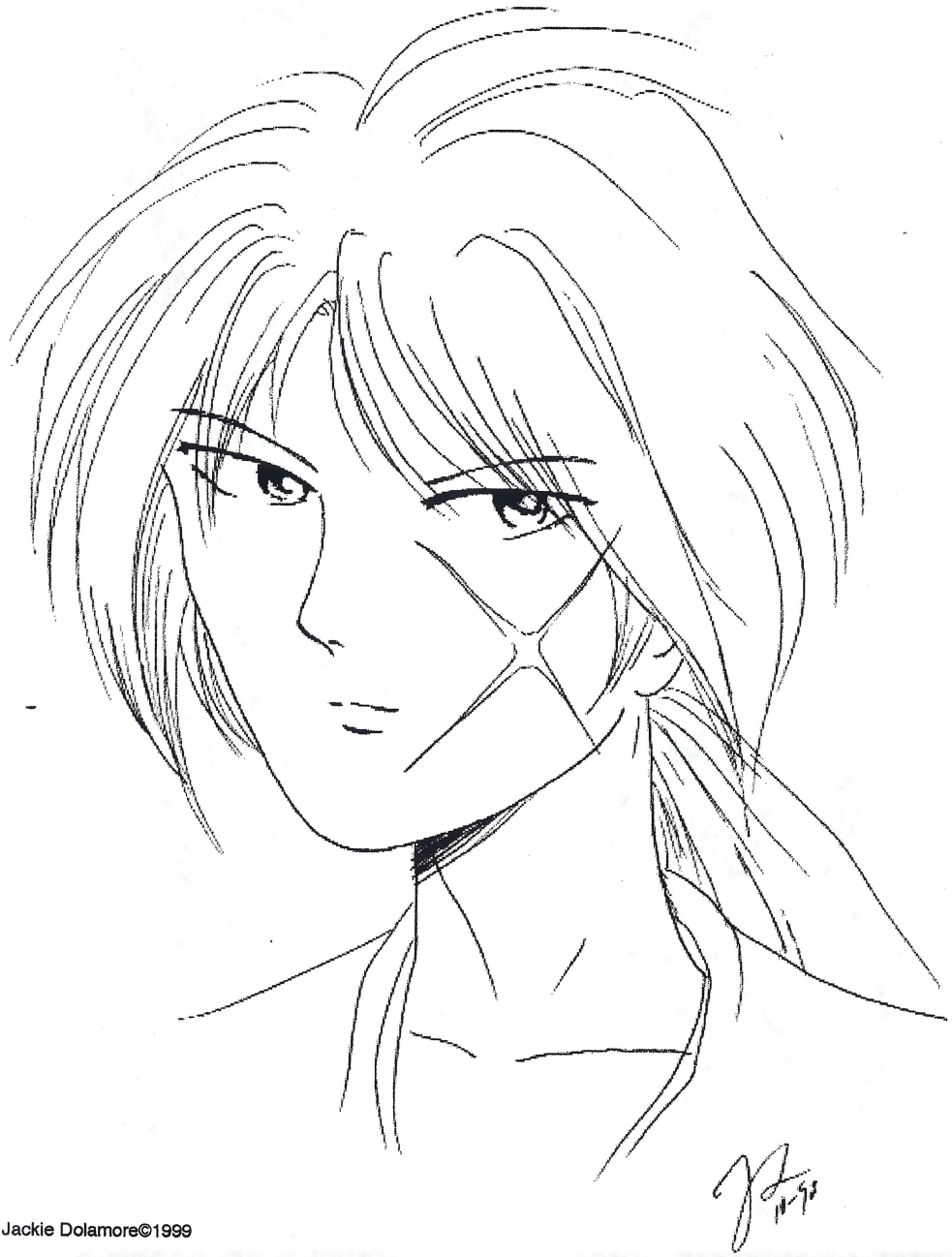
My favorites aren't even specific to anime. Frederik L. Schodt's *Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics* (260 pgs., $22.00) and *Dreamland Japan* (360 pgs., $16.95) should be fascinating to anyone who wants to know more about manga. *Manga! Manga!* is a history of manga and discusses themes and artists. It also has short sections from manga such as Riyoko Ikeda's *Rose of Versailles* and Osamu Tezuka's *Hi no Tori*. *Dreamland Japan* looks at modern manga magazines and the fan community in America, and has a tribute to Osamu Tezuka, along with more exploration of themes and artists like we saw in *Manga! Manga!*. These books are well-written and highly readable.

Another book of possible interest to the otaku (and a personal favorite of mine) is *Eastern Standard Time* by Jeff Yang, Dina Gan, Terry Hong and the staff of *A. Magazine* (340 pgs., $15.00-pretty cheap, too). This book is subtitled "a guide to asian influence on american culture" and you'll learn all sorts of things from it-the difference between soba and ramen, different Martial arts styles, and Godzilla movies, how to hold chopsticks and make a paper crane, and, of course, it has 12 pages dedicated to anime. It covers not just Japan but all of Asia, even India, and is probably for you if your love of anime is causing you to want a kimono, learn Japanese and eat sushi regularly. There's also *The Encyclopedia of Japanese Pop Culture*, by Mark Schilling, which I have yet to get my hands on but it seems to be similar to *Eastern Standard Time* but solely about Japan. Another book coming out soon is called *Japan Edge; Discovering Japanese Pop Culture*, edited by Satoru Fujii-among the writers are people familiar to the anime fan community such as Carl Gustav Horn and translator Matt Thorn.



That seems to be about it for the books presently available for the anime fan. Seeing as most of these books are copyright 1996 or earlier, we'll probably be seeing more to come. In fact, if you want to write one, now might be a good time.

FAN ART!



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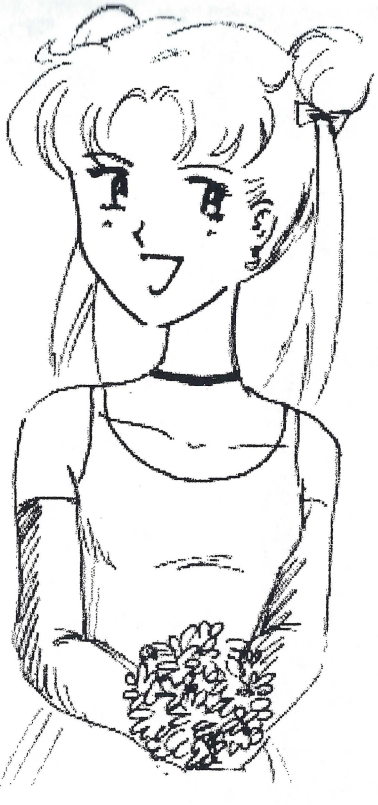

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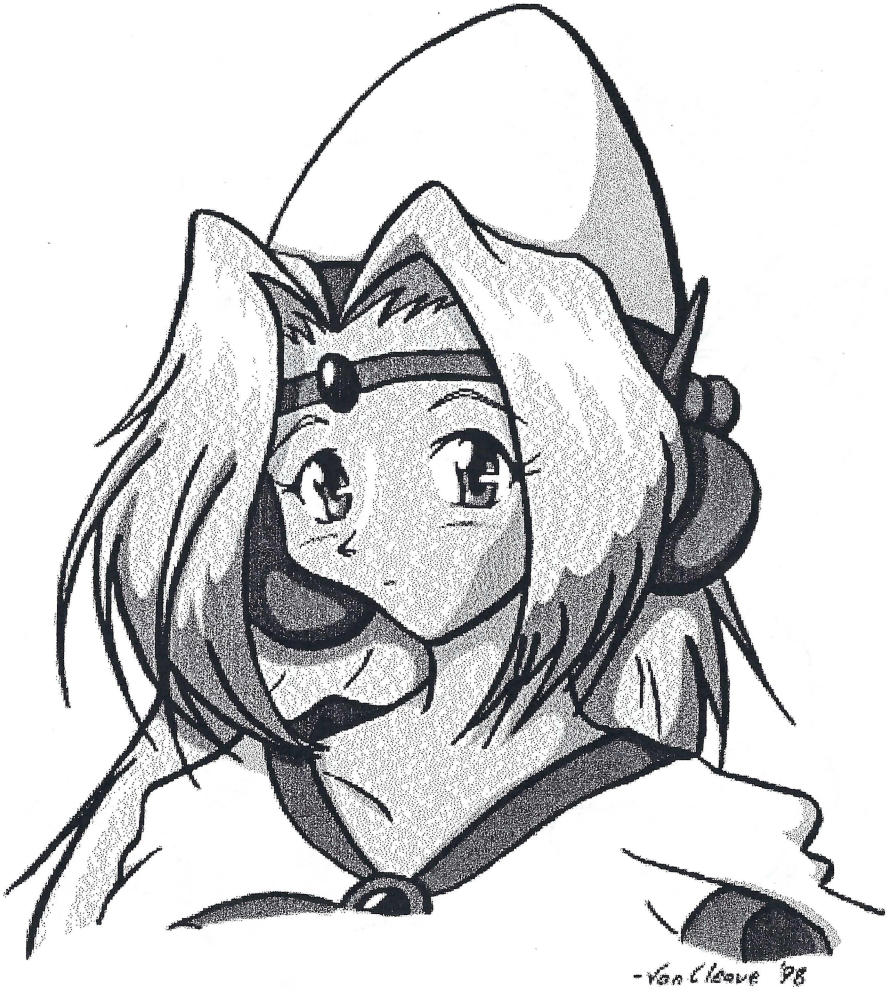

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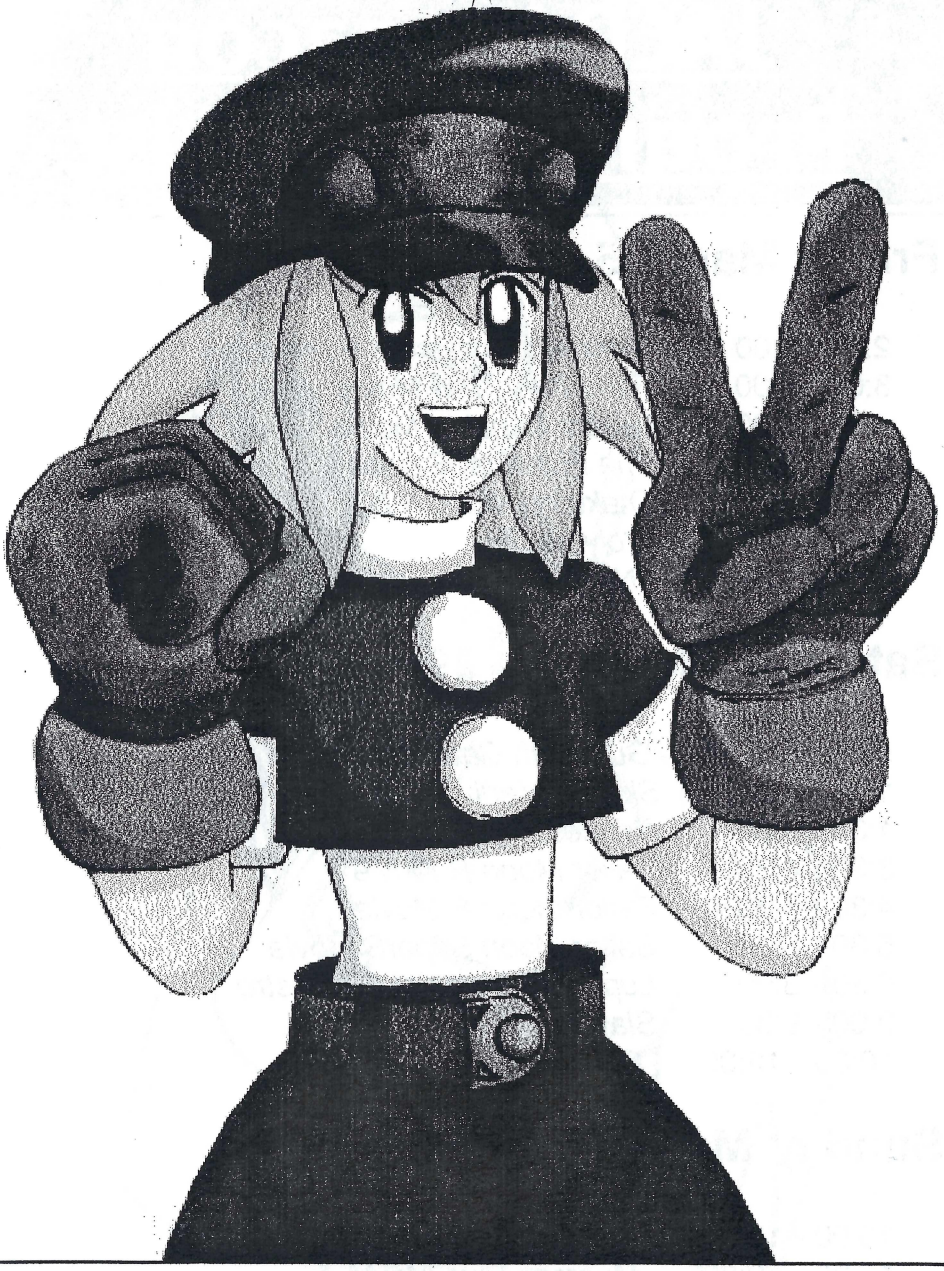

ROLL

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JACO Megacon Programming List

Friday March 5, 1999

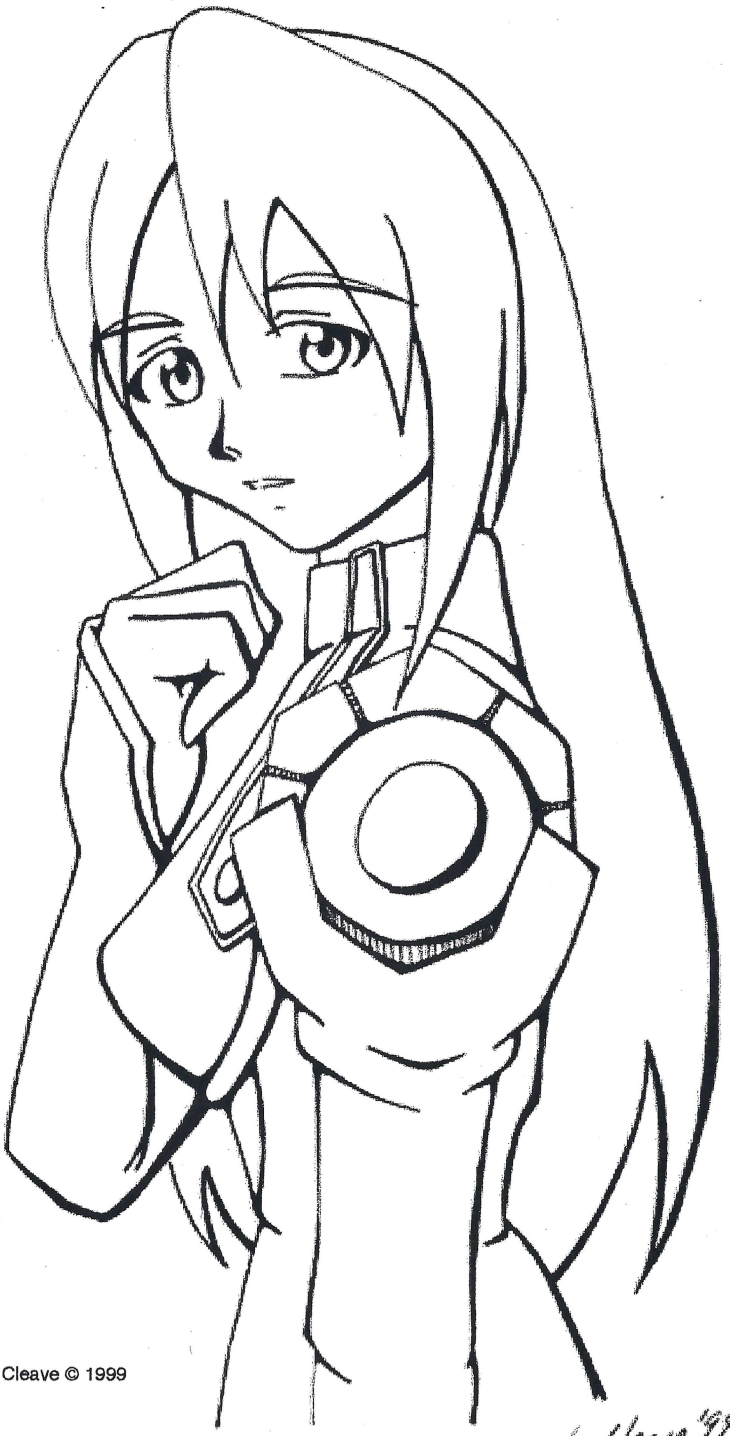
2:00 - 3:00	*Lupin III: Plot of the Fuma Clan*
3:00 - 4:00	*Fatal Fury: The Movie*
4:30 - 6:00	*Ruroni Kenshin Movie*
6:00 - 7:00	*The Five Star Stories*
7:00 - 8:00	*Otaku no Video 1 & 2*
9:00 - 10:30	*Polymatrix*
10:30 - 12:00	*Ninja Scroll*

Saturday March 6, 1999

10:00 - 11:30	*Gunsmith Cats: Bulletproof*
11:30 - 1:30	*Skyline Media Block*
1:30 - 3:30	*Princess Monoke*
3:30 - 4:30	*Sailor Moon R Movie*
4:30 - 5:30	*Sailor Moon S Movie*
5:30 - 6:30	*Sailor Moon SuperS Movie*
6:30 - 8:00	*Lupin III: Castle of Cagliostro*
8:00 - 9:30	*Slayers Movie*
10:30 - 12:00	*Transformers: The Movie*

Sunday March 7, 1999

10:00 - 10:30	*Anime Music Videos*
10:30 - 12:00	*Macross Plus Movie*
12:00 - 1:30	*Lupin III: Dead or Alive*
1:30 - 3:00	*Kiki's Delivery Service* (Streamline Dub)
3:00 - 5:00	*Neon Genesis Evangelion: End of Evangelion*



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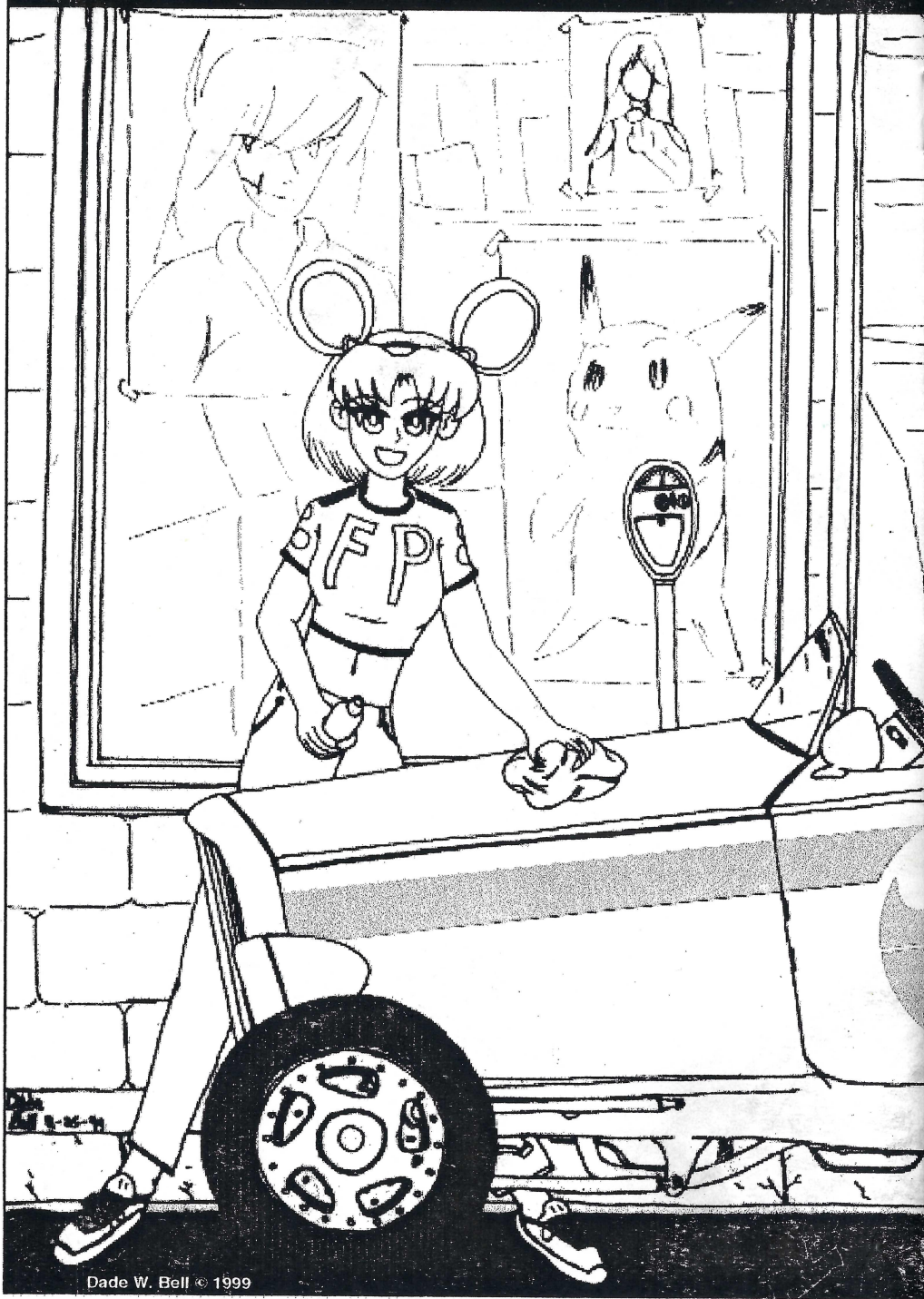
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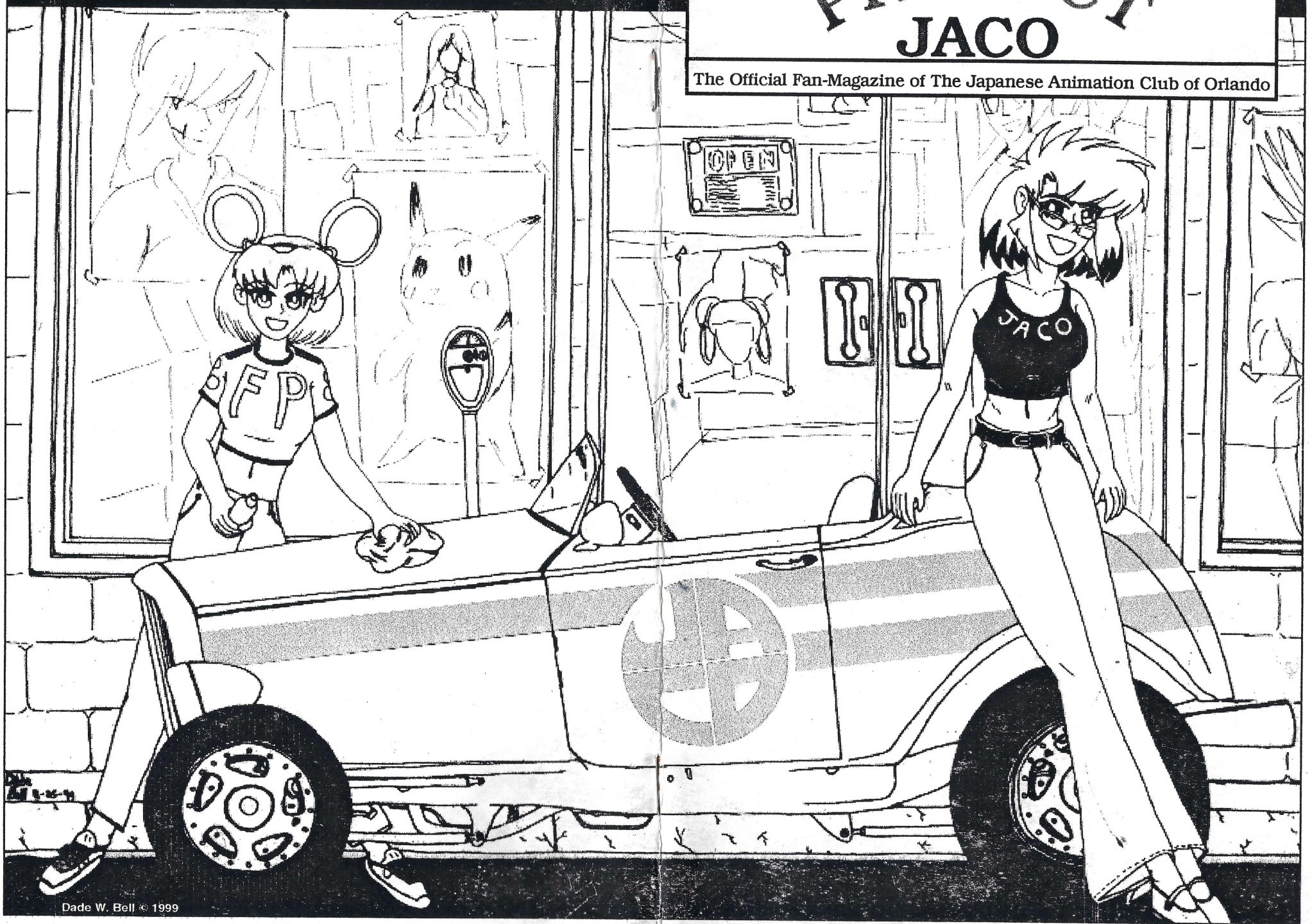

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